

It's beginning to book a lot like Christmas, Amigas in ev'ry store

Ridiculous esoteric title chosen, cheesy cover in place, let me introduce the Everything Amiga book of the blog! Nearly two years in the making and a couple of months in my assembly workshop, it's finally landed; the tome four and a bit (albeit clinically insane) people suggested might be worth a shot.

Without a whiff of sarcasm in the air (ha-de-ha-ha), its production went 100% according to plan and compiling 218 articles into a single PDF was an absolute breeze. Why did I ever imagine up-scaling chunky pixel art graphics using anything other than even integers would be a good idea? Hmmph. My next project will be titled, 'The dos and don'ts of blog to ebook conversion'. I could write a whole book on the subject! What a stocking filler that would be.



I've added new graphics and collages, cleaned up and enhanced old ones, replaced any murky scanned articles with crystal clear OCR'd text and massaged my entire works into a format our fickle conversion software can chew on without choking and falling over on its back. Something that nearing the end it had down to a fine art! JTITTD (catchy, eh!) amounts to 441,756 words spread across 3,348 pages - only 13,369 words shy of the Lord of the Rings trilogy - so that ought to have the trees quaking in their roots!

The result is available as 'donationware' with all proceeds channelled towards the Make-A-Wish Foundation, as with this year's Amigathon which raised £714. Below you will find a link to download my 'wittertainment' doorstep (please don't sue me Mayo and Kermode, it's for charity), right away and then pledge as little or as much as you can afford whenever it's convenient. The file is 640 smegabytes in bigitude so

hopefully you've got something more powerful than a Nokia 6210 on which to read it! I don't do compression, I'm a hi-fi guy - this is a grainy JPG free zone.

That said, I'll confess now, stylistically it's hardly up to the standard of Neil 'Kickstart' Mansell. My offering is basic text with pictures on a white background. Think of it as an imageless novel and then all the pixel art, movie stills and whatnot will strike you as a pleasant bonus surprise. Luckily the text is of Pulitzer Prize-winning quality, eh ... I'm assured the trophy is in the mail. ;)

So there you have it, that's my not-so-little booky-wook wot I done rote all on my lonesome. I've worked my ickie fingers to the bone on this, literally-metaphorically-for-realsies, so let's make it count for something please awesome Amiga peeps!

Which reminds me...

"Make-A-Wish UK grant magical wishes to enrich the lives of children and young people fighting life-threatening conditions. Granting their wish provides seriously ill children with hope for the future, strength to cope and resilience to fight their condition. They're given quality time away from the daily realities of living with their condition and given the chance to make magical memories they can treasure forever, whatever their future may hold. We want to transform the lives of 1,000 children this year by granting their One True Wish!"

Just throw it

to the ducks



Forewordingseses

Thanking you muchiously for purchasing this 'New Release' retro gaming waffletome, you've made a super-duper shrewd choice; just like all Codemasters games it's 'Absolutely Brilliant'... and that's official. No, really! The author told me so and he's proper Sensible.

As you'll know - because you're reading these top-secret words squirrelled away inside an exclusive PDF available only to generous supporters - *a//* proceeds from the sales of this book are to be donated to the miraculous Make-A-Wish Foundation; a phenomenally worthy charity who "grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy", to quote the non-profit organisation's ambitious mission statement.





What follows is the compiled witterings comprising my contribution to everythingamiga.com thus far. It encompasses principally Amiga gaming retrospective articles featuring fascinating insight from many of the developers who breathed life into the classics we know and cherish, and also some we love to hate.

Most genres are catered for, from action to erm, zuzzle. Oodles of games you'll know like the back of your hand, yet hopefully *still* find enlightening, whilst others fall indubitably into the 'get oudda here, you just made that up' territory of

obscurity. And I *did*, with *one* of them. See if you can guess which one it is kiddies.



A jumbo chunk of these were originally penned in honour of the week-long Amigathon 2017 charity event, also staged for the benefit of the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Why Make-A-Wish of all the fabulously worthy causes in the universe?

When you wish upon an Amiga

Late on a Friday afternoon approaching a bank holiday weekend back in 1993 Commodore's chief financial officer, Colin Proudfoot, took an unexpected call from a lady from the 'Make a Wish Foundation' who was desperately trying to fulfil the dying wishes of a terminally ill boy. That wish was to be able to spend his rapidly dwindling remaining days on earth

playing Amiga games on a computer his family couldn't afford to purchase themselves.

Colin pulled out the stops ensuring a gleaming new Amiga 1200 Comic Relief pack featuring the official charity game, Sleepwalker, arrived on his doorstep within two hours. Soon after his mother got in touch with Colin to relay the family's gratitude for the gift, along with the bitter-sweet news that her son had died the following week with a smile on his face doing what he loved most in the world.



Splat

Commodore has teamed up with Ocean on the ever-increasing Comic Relief Sleepwalker initiative, having produced a limited edition A1200 pack, which should just have been released by the time you read this.

Only 25,000 of the packs, which includes a copy of Sleepwalker and, of course, an A1200, have been produced, and for each one sold £10 is donated to Comic Relief - so if they sell out, that's a quarter of a million quid gone to charity. "What could be nicer than giving money to a worthy cause and getting a fantastic new Amiga 1200 at the same time?" reasons Commodore MD Kelly Sumner.

We thought about this and have to admit we couldn't think of anything better. Well, nothing that we could print, anyway. £399.99 is the asking price (thirty quid cheaper than a bog-standard pack), so hop to it before they're all gone.

The One issue 54 (March 1993)



To commemorate this touching act of kindness on the momentous occasion of the Amiga's 32nd birthday (23rd July), and hopefully make another child's dreams come true before it's too late, I'd like to pitch a rather strange, yet fitting fundraiser... a sponsored Amiga game review, and Amigos video cast marathon.

Beginning on 7th August, the challenge is for me to write a review/retrospective article a day for a week, or at least until I keel over at my desk, whilst Aaron and John intend to mark the event with a 12-hour Amigathon on Youtube! The former may sound like quite a pitiful pledge now it's on the page in black and white, though given some of my previous ramblings have extended to 20 pages in length, blood, sweat and tears *will* be shed.

So if you're sick of the sound of my voice, now's your chance to work me into the ground and shut me up for keeps. If on the other hand you actually *enjoy* my waffle (you never know, it *could* happen), you'll get to read a heck of a lot more of it. Either way, everyone's a winner!



Each and every contribution, large or small, is greatly appreciated so get donating, and together we can change someone's brief, but no less significant life for the better, one review or play-through at a time.

Donations can be made through the Everything Amiga Just Giving page before, during or after the event, and as we won't be handling a penny personally, you can be sure none of it will be spent buying vintage Amiga gear from eBay!



Prior to that, one even led to Larry Kenny - the voice of ThunderCat Lion-O - agreeing to provide an intro soundbite for the Amigos Podcast. An unreal feat for which I'll be eternally grateful.



You'll discover how old school gaming studios transformed licensed cartoon and movie franchises into playable 'experiences' and the reception with which they were met. And even get to visit first-hand (leap of faith not included) the erstwhile premises of one of the most prolific developer-publishing outfits of our time.

What remains is a blended hodgepodgery of interviews with veteran industry insiders, Commodore oriented commentary and analysis, retro computing inspired crafting, and regrettably, some 'Games That Weren't'.



Spurred on by the infectious enthusiasm of Amigos Aaron Doughty and John Shawler, these were mostly scribed on a smartphone... on the bus, propping up lampposts *waiting* for buses, prowling the streets of Manchester (the *proper* one in England), at the 85th birthday party of a narrowboat in Blackburn, traipsing through eerily silent Normandy cornfields in pitch darkness at 5.00 am, and even loitering in

a McDonald's car park at 2.00 am waiting for a ferry to dock at Poole harbour. If it hadn't been for the encouragement and technical support of the Amigos and 'brain trust' support network this book would never have come to fruition, so you have them to thank (or *curse*) for the fact that it *did*.



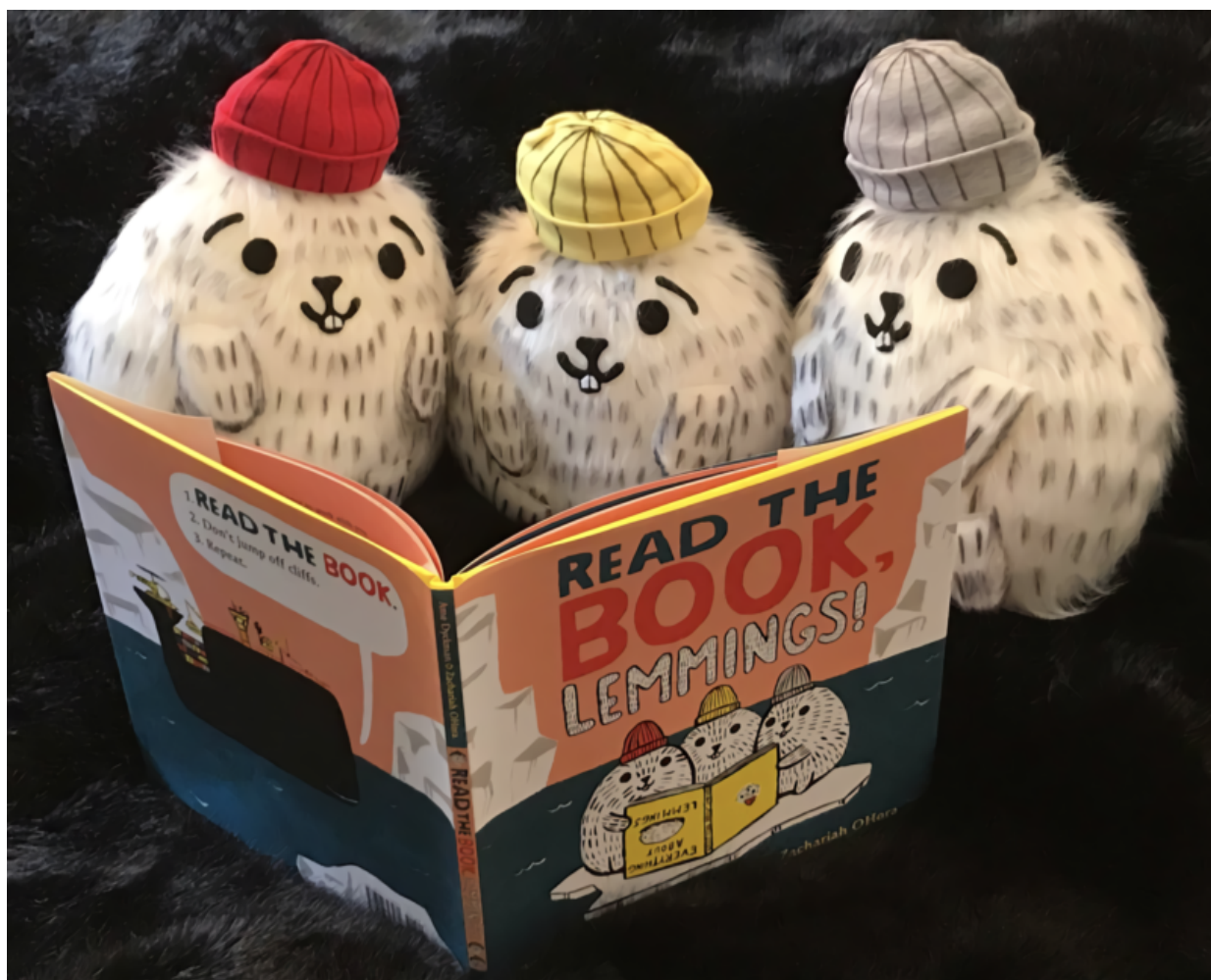
Screenshot shown may be from alternative version.

In dotting tribute to our beloved, yet acutely misguided late Commodore, no thought or planning has gone into the order of the chapters (they're not even sequentially numbered as a whole for technical reasons), so where they lead will be as random as a fairground lucky dip. Much like the approach to business management of Commodore's greedy purse-string guarding puppeteers.

Where *we're* going we don't *need* structure!

If you enjoy this wistful, meandering odyssey through the life and times of a die-hard Amigan, I've been your time-travelling tour guide, dreamkatcha. If not, I'm... oh, I dunno, one of the Moomins.

Set vocal cords to soprano and "*Let's go!*"



MAKE A WISH



Make A Wish - The Aftermath!

Are you diggin' the epic drama yet?, or do I need to draft in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra? Oh that's good because I believe they're a bit tied up in Spain at the moment.

Battles fought and won, now the House Amiga has ceased smoking and the dust has settled, with the pennies counted, the results are in! John and Aaron's crazy 43,200 second Amigathon went down a storm thanks to their meticulous preparation, and was also a roaring success in financial terms - a whopping £x.xx (I'm building up to the final figure for theatrical effect, please pretend you don't already know) will be winging its way to the Make A Wish Foundation very shortly, where it will be put to excellent use making the fleeting lives of chronically sick children as happy as humanly possible.



Of course none of it would have been possible without the dedicated support of all you wonderful, exceptionally generous Amiga nerds out there. *You* made this happen so feel free to stop for a minute to look in the mirror and feel proper chuffed with yourselves. To everyone who watched,

participated, spread the word or donated, thank you! Miner bless you, one and all! ;)

In fact, more specifically let's 'Hall of Fame' all 41 good Samaritans for posterity...

Erik Sundstrom, Kim Tommy Humborstad, Duncan Styles, Tony Day, Jonas Rullo, Lori Halstead, Gary Hucker, Kevin, Adam Battersby, Pixels At Dawn, Scottyboy, Paul Kitching, Mike and Sally Shawler, Darren Coles, Theresa Racer, Mik Shinn, Modern Vintage Gamer, Terri Howard, Steve Legg, Anonymous, Steve Rasmussen, Retro Hour Podcast, Philip aka Pishbot, Chris Foulds, John Marshall, John Norris, Eip Shawler, Anthony Jarvis, Alan Kebab, Robert Leffmann, Jarlath, Will Williams, Erlend Dal Sakshaug, Graham Wobcke, Graham Wobcke (yep again), Darren Hall, Duncan Styles, Chris Foulds (again, not a typo), Jason Warnes, Paul Harrington, Paul Harrington (double trouble!).

And now for the moment I've been looking forward to since the donations started flooding in; it's time to push the most satisfying web page button I've ever had the pleasure to push...

...oh, the money is transferred automatically, I don't have to do anything at all. Well that was an anti-climax. Not to worry, you raised **£715** and that's awesome however you cut it. Congratulations guys!



Doorstop of twaddle part two has landed!

It's here, the wait is finally over. You can download it if you want. I mean you don't *have* to, it's optional, please yourself. I'm not even sure why you'd bother to be honest, it's not very good after all. It's got another stupid title that doesn't say what it does on the tin and this one waffles on for 3127 pages, which is much shorter than 'Artamene ou le Grand Cyrus', but still a heck of a lot of drivel you can likely live without.

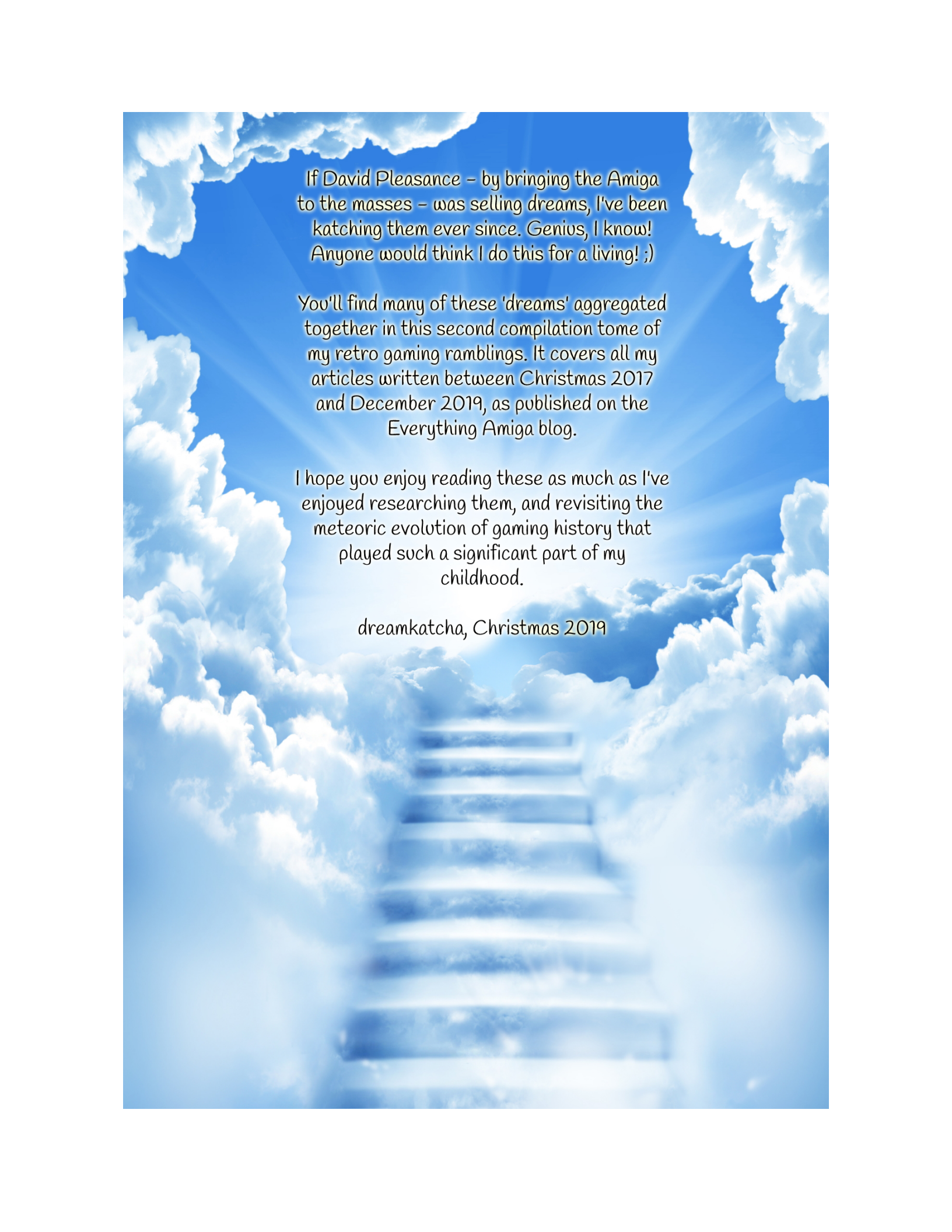
Where the illustrations are concerned I was shooting for 'artistic', but think I may have overstepped the mark and descended into pure, filthy erotica. I'll probably just delete the whole thing before anyone sees it. All a bit of an embarrassing mess really.

...and with that, the weary, long-form retro gaming review rolled over on its crusty back, mouth agape. Vacant, glassy-eyed, it gazed expectantly at the stars before croaking its last breath. A distant cricket was heard to say, "Will you keep the noise down for Christ's sake?, I'm trying to get to sleep. I've got to be at work again at 6.00 am!".

Tell me about
the rabbits
again George



everythingamiga.com



If David Pleasance - by bringing the Amiga to the masses - was selling dreams, I've been katching them ever since. Genius, I know! Anyone would think I do this for a living! ;)

You'll find many of these 'dreams' aggregated together in this second compilation tome of my retro gaming ramblings. It covers all my articles written between Christmas 2017 and December 2019, as published on the Everything Amiga blog.

I hope you enjoy reading these as much as I've enjoyed researching them, and revisiting the meteoric evolution of gaming history that played such a significant part of my childhood.

dreamkatcha, Christmas 2019



GamesMaster

Bad Influence

ZX Spectrum

Amiga

The best of Kookosity

retro gaming edition

A few years before moving to Blogger I wrote articles for an independent web site that no longer exists. Not even a crumbling headstone with fuzzy moss obliterating the inscription. Anything worth salvaging was rescued and reproduced here, so taking the two hosts into account, some point this year (probably around Christmas time) marks the 20th anniversary of my online presence. Woohoo! etc. etc.

Come on, settle down now, don't blow all the party poppers at once! Brexit could happen at any moment, honest.

Anyhow, to celebrate I thought I'd check the entire blog for dead links, upgrade the images where possible and produce an ebook compilation of my favourite (retro gaming themed) entries. What a wild life I lead, eh. :|

These highlights include my...

- Two part GamesMaster retrospective
- Bad Influence retrospective
- GamesMaster episode database
- Amiga game remakes database
- Amiga emulation guide covering WinUAE and Winfellow
- Joystick and joypad reviews roundup and charts
- From Bedrooms to Billions DVD review
- Amiga demo scene retrospective
- Brief DOSBox emulation guide
- Kid Gloves Amiga game review
- Interview with Richard Sekula (the man responsible for the golden GamesMaster joystick concept)
- General games emulation advice, retro gaming news and associated babble

THIS PAGE LEFT

INTENTIONALLY

USELESS

